

Memorandum

From: Speaker David Ralston

To: All House Members and Staff

Date: December 21, 2021

RE: Convening of the 2022 Legislative Special Session on January 10, 2022

As we prepare for a return to the Capitol for the 2022 Legislative Session, just a few short weeks after concluding the special session, there are quite a few topics of importance that must be addressed prior to the Session commencing. After consulting with Dr. Toomey, we will start the session with many of the procedures being the same as the 2021 special session, but please take the time to read this information thoroughly.

MEMBER SEATING: If you chose to sit in the gallery during special session and would like to be assigned a seat in the House Chamber, or were assigned a seat in the House Chamber and would like to move to the gallery, please respond to this email and let us know as soon as possible. As with the special session, because preparations have to be made to move microphones, program the voting machines and tablets, and other items, members will NOT be allowed to make a different designation. If you choose to sit in the House Gallery, you will have to sit there for the entirety of the special session and vice versa. There will likely be changes to the seating chart from the 2021 special session.

STAFF REPORTING TO CAPITOL: House Staff should report to the Capitol for the operating hours (8:30 AM through 4:30 PM) beginning Tuesday, January 4th. Monday, January 3rd will be observed for January 1st.

OPENING DAY PROCEDURES: Session will begin January 10, 2022.

TESTING: During the 2022 Session, Georgia Tech will again be operating a testing site for General Assembly Members and Capitol Staff. The test that Georgia Tech will be using is a saliva-based PCR test (no nasal swab required) and is intended for asymptomatic individuals only. (In the event that a Member or House staff is symptomatic, they should not report to the Capitol to be tested, but should be tested offsite before returning. If a Member or House staff has difficulty finding a testing site with availability, they should contact the Office of the Speaker for assistance.)

After a sample is collected, it will be taken to Georgia Tech to be processed and analyzed. The healthcare provider responsible for delivering the results of these tests is Northeast Georgia Health System. The results of each test will be made available the morning following the test prior to 8AM and an individual who tests positive will be immediately notified they should not report to the Capitol. If you do not receive a phone call the morning after testing, you can be sure you did not test positive, unless an email has been sent to all users stating that the test results have been delayed. As part of the testing process, contact tracing will be performed in the event of a positive test result. All Members and House staff are strongly encouraged to participate in contact tracing efforts.

The testing site will be located in Room 230 of the Capitol and will be open for testing from 7:00 AM through 12:00 PM on Wednesdays.

As with the 2021 special session, **members and staff, regardless of vaccination status, must participate in the testing** conducted by Georgia Tech at the Capitol during the legislative session. Everyone will

begin testing. Positive test results are always examined to see if they are the result of a recent confirmed Covid-19 infection. If it is determined that the positive test result is because of a recent confirmed case of Covid-19, you will not need to test again. **Everyone is required to test with GT no later than January 12th.**

Prior to being allowed to report to the 2022 session on January 10th, a negative test at a location of your choosing, taken **no earlier** than Friday, January 7th, must be provided to Donald Cronin, HR Director. Testing will take place at the Capitol on Wednesday, January 5th from 8am-11am if that is an easier option than testing elsewhere and those test results do not have to be provided to Donald Cronin.

MASKS: In accordance with the CDC guidelines at the time the decision had to be made to prepare for session and in consultation with Dr. Toomey, masks must be worn by all Members and House staff while present in the House Chamber, the House Gallery, and any committee meeting. Masks *may* be (but are not required to be) removed when a Member is addressing the House (whether seated in the House Chamber or the House Gallery) or when a Member is speaking during a Committee meeting. Masks must be promptly replaced upon the conclusion of a Member's remarks.

Masks also must be worn by any and all members of the public who enter the House Chamber, House Committee Rooms, or any other spaces under the control of the Georgia House of Representatives. Members of the public *may* (but are not required to) remove their masks when speaking during a House Committee meeting or addressing the House. Masks must be promptly replaced upon the conclusion of a member of the public's remarks.

MEMBERS ADDRESSING THE BODY: Members who wish to give a Morning Order, offer an announcement, or speak to a bill will do so from the well. Otherwise, Members should remain at their assigned seat or microphone to address the House.

GUEST POLICY: As in the 2021 Regular Session, the House Page program is suspended until further notice. Invite resolutions or recognition of guests will only occur on an extremely limited basis as approved by the Office of the Speaker until further notice. We will continue the Chaplain of the Day program, but no guests will be permitted into the House Chamber with the Chaplain of the Day.

As has always been the case, Members are reminded that Members must notify the Office of the Clerk if they wish to be "Excused" from a specific vote or for an entire day of the 2022 Session for any reason.